Community Participation
A Training module for
Anganwadi Workers

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PREFACE

Almost all reviews of the ICDS programme have pointed up at the fact that, even though it was originally conceptualised as a programme to be taken over and run by communities themselves, it has, in over a decade of its operation, succeeded in involving communities only marginally. A review of research (1*) indicates the main problems :

1. Beneficiaries are not very much aware of the scheme and its provisions.
2. The objectives of the scheme do not match with the perceptions of parents about their goals for their children.
3. The composition of the local coordination committees, which are intended to be a major mechanism for enabling community control of the scheme, is usually tilted in favour of privileged groups.
4. Where local committees have been formed, they are not effective participants in decision-making.
5. The way in which the scheme is launched in a new area does not give the requisite 'lead time' for the community to become aware of its provisions and make a conscious decision to participate. As a result, the scheme is seen as another government dole.
6. Project functionaries have not been able to motivate and involve the community, and lack the skills to do so.
7. The Supervisors and CDPO's do not provide the needed support to the Anganwadi worker to involve the community.
8. The scheme is implemented in a rigid and inflexible manner, and is not always adapted to the local reality and felt needs.
9. There are no incentives and support for the Anganwadi workers to involve the community.
10. The Anganwadi worker is bogged down by routine work.
11. The scheme expects the participation of the poor and marginalised groups of the community in an unrealistic way, demanding an investment of either their resources or their time.
12. There is little coordination with other agencies and local organisations in mobilising support and resources.

As the frontline worker of the ICDS scheme, the role of the Anganwadi worker is critical. Her attitude and functioning decide the face of the scheme. While it is true that training is a vital input in ensuring that the Anganwadi worker understands her role as supplementary to the community's efforts, and functions as a community worker rather than a worker in a government scheme, we must clearly recognise that training alone cannot be the remedy for all the ills that might afflict the scheme. The situation as it exists today, is as much the result of the contradictions between the structure of the scheme, and the mechanisms for its implementation, as of other factors. Apart from the Anganwadi worker, the entire structure of the scheme is made up to government employees within a typical bureaucratic frame work. At best, people are consulted about the project and are asked to help in implementing it, but there is no space for them to participate in planning and management at any level above the village level.

By focusing on the Anganwadi worker as the crucial factor in eliciting community participation, we are seeking to exploit the space and opportunities which exist, even in the present structure of the scheme, for the community to actively participate in the planning and management of the scheme at the grassroots. This approach assumes that the Anganwadi worker will be equipped not only with the necessary understanding, information and skills, but also that her efforts will be supported and supplemented by her Supervisor and CDPO. Obviously, this would involve some changes in the way in which her work is monitored and evaluated, as well as an agreement that adherence to strict time frames is neither possible nor desirable.

In this Manual, we have tried to focus on some aspects of community participation in development and the Anganwadi worker's role in eliciting it. Our approach has been to present the scheme as one which is ultimately to be managed and implemented by the community itself The role of the Anganwadi worker is therefore to establish and strengthen the ownership of the community, We have focused on women - especially women from the poorest

.(1*)   Reference : Sharma, Adarsh, *Community Participation in ICDS.* Yojána (April 1-15, 1987)

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families - as the key constituency for the Anganwadi worker.

The Manual consists of lesson plans for 7 sessions which comprise a core module. Depending on the situation, this can be supplemented with additional sessions on specific subjects (e.g.., available resources in the project area in terms of governmental and non-government development schemes, coordinating with other functionaries etc.) This module can also be combined with the training module on Communication.

It goes without saying that the changed focus reflected in this module cannot become effective unless the trainers who will implement it share the same understanding and meaning of community participation. Mere transmission of certain "techniques" for eliciting community participation cannot bring about any lasting changes on the ground, as experience in ICDS training has conclusively demonstrated. Trainers must themselves have the capacity to make the training situation an experience in participation where the learners and their experience are recognised and valued as the basis for change. A top-down, 'expert' model of training will contradict the very principles underlying the idea of community participation. Further capacity-building for ICDS trainers may therefore be a necessary next step to bringing about a basic change in the present situation.

Dr. Kalyani Menon Sen

CONTENTS

TO THE TRAINER

Dear Friend,

As a trainer of ICDS functionaries, you must by now be aware of the importance of increasing the involvement of the community the functioning of the programme at all levels and stages. As the person on whom the success of the programme ultimately rests, it is very essential that the capacity of the Anganwadi worker to be an effective community worker, is built up in this training programme. The roles which she is called upon to play in the implementation of the programme, demand that she be able to :

- understand the importance of the community in the ICDS programme.
- know about the various methods by which she can facilitate community involvement in different aspects of the programme.
- acquire skills in using some of these methods.

This training programme is the first and most important structured learning opportunity for the Anganwadi worker Of course, she will be learning continuously on the job, and will be coming back to you from time to time for refresher courses, but it is essential that she leave this training programme equipped with the basic tools and skills she will require to do her job efficiently. It all depends on how well she gets alongwith the community - the parents, particularly the mothers of the children in her centre, as well as others in the village.

As a trainer, there are some things you must keep in mind when running this programme.

* In most cases, the Anganwadi worker of a particular centre will be herself belong to the village and will know quite a lot about the conditions and people she will have to deal with.

* The Anganwadi worker is an adult, and comes to this training programme with considerable life experience of relating to and working with the people. This experience - which is different for each individual member of the group, including yourself - can be a valuable basis for learning.

* In training this group of Anganwadi workers, you are yourself working with a group. You, and the way in which you function, will serve as a model to your learners of many of the things you will be telling them - how to understand and relate to people and their concerns, how to ensure that they participate in various activities, how to help them to open up and express themselves, and how to help them to learn, plan and act together.

* It is very difficult, if not impossible, to help others to learn from their experience, unless you yourself have some similar experience and are willing to share it. It is essential that you use your opportunities to be in the field, to gather this experience. You will find that working with a community is not always the same thing as talking about it - not so easy and not so predictable.

* Every community is different from the other. There are no rules which ensure results. No matter, how experienced you are as a trainer and as a community worker, it is not possible for you to have all the answers and all the solutions to the problems your trainees may face when they work in the community. The best thing to do is help trainees to share their experiences of problems and solutions. You will find that many innovative strategies and fresh approaches are generated in such experience-based and participatory training sessions.

Each chapter in this book deals with one particular training session within the overall AWW Job Training Course. These sessions are arranged in a logical sequence. Apart from the content of the session, we have also included some suggestions on how to run the session. We have suggested some methods which may be appropriate in relation to the focus of learning in each particular session - whether learning facts or understanding a concept, becoming aware of or sensitive to an issue, or learning a skill. These are only suggestions - you may want to try out other ways of

dealing with each topic, However, you must be sure to choose a method that is appropriate for the content you are dealing with, and which you are sufficiently skilled in handling. An inappropriate method, or an appropriate method used clumsily, will both hamper learning.

In the coloured pages at the end of this Manual, we have included some material on various training methods which have been found effective in helping adults to learn. These are mostly experiential methods - that is, they use experience as the primary basis of learning. This section contains information on how to use each method in the most effective way.

We hope you will find this manual useful. Please let us have your comments and suggestions - they help us in improving it.
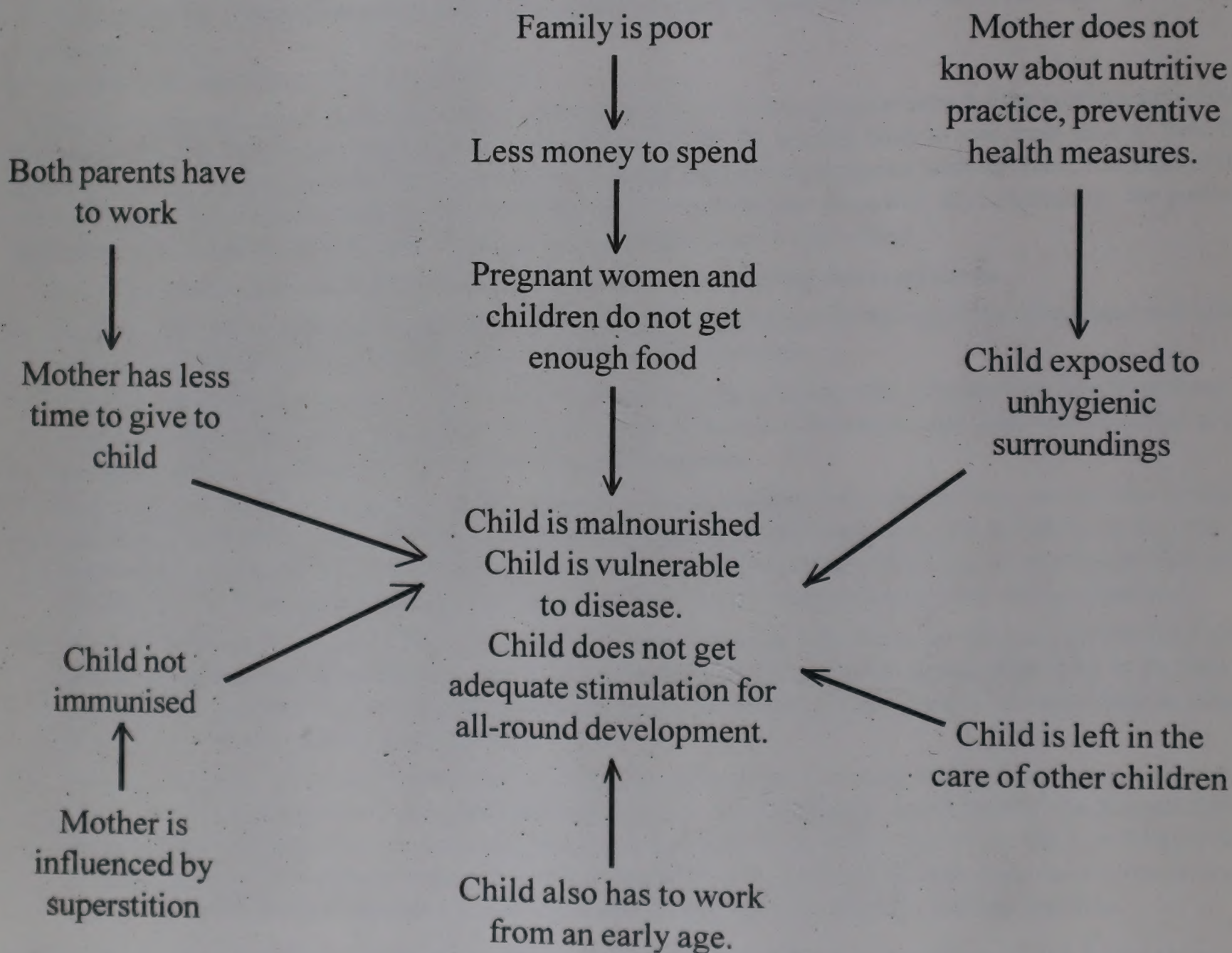
Your friends at 'PRIA'

SESSION 1

Objectives

1. To understand the need and importance of involving the community in the ICDS programme.
2. To understand the role of the Anganwadi worker in bringing about better community participation.

CONTENT

At the beginning of this training course, we talked about the situation of women and children in our country. We saw that, for a large number of people in our country who are poor, this situation is like being trapped in a complex web of circumstances all of which are interrelated and which result in women and children being deprived of access to nutrition, health, education and the stimulation and support necessary for developing their full potential as human beings and citizens of the nation.

Family is poor
↓
Less money to spend
↓
Pregnant women and children do not get enough food
↓

Mother does not know about nutritive practice, preventive health measures.
↓
Child exposed to unhygienic surroundings

Both parents have to work
↓
Mother has less time to give to child

Child not immunised
↑
Mother is influenced by superstition

Child is malnourished
Child is vulnerable to disease.
Child does not get adequate stimulation for all-round development.
↑
Child also has to work from an early age.

Child is left in the care of other children

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It seems very obvious that for this situation to change, there has to be action at several levels.

The ICDS programme, as we know, has multiple objectives.

- improving the nutritional and health status of children in the age group of 0-6 years;
- laying the foundation for the proper psychological and physical development of the child;
- reducing the incidence of malnutrition, death, illness and school dropouts among children;
- bringing together the efforts of various departments and programmes to promote child development.
- to enhance the capacity of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child.

The ICDS programme was started in 1975. Before this, there had been many programmes which had tried to tackle the various aspects of the situation - health, nutrition, education for mother etc. - separately. However, it was realised that for women and children from very poor families, it was difficult to reach these various facilities since it involved a lot of time which meant a loss of income. Also, many of these services were located away from the village and were difficult to access. As a result, very few people were able to avail of all the services together at the appropriate time, so that, overall, there was little change in the situation. To overcome these problems, it was proposed that all the services required to ensure the health and development of children, would be made available to all the children of the vulnerable groups and their mothers, in a single package and at the village level. It was hoped that in this way, everyone who needed these services would get them and, over a period of time, the situation would improve.

From the very beginning of the ICDS, it has been accepted that, no matter how well and efficiently the services were delivered the programme would have only a limited impact in the long term, unless it moved outside the four walls of the Anganwadi centre. Ultimately, the children in the community are the responsibility of the community. Unless there are some basic changes at the level of the family and community, there is no guarantee that the process of physical, mental and social development nurtured in the Anganwadi centre will continue after the child leaves the centre at the age of six, and reaches adulthood. For this reason, it was planned that, over a course of time, the community would be prepared to take over the scheme, until, in about fifteen years, ICDS would be truly a people's programme, with the community organising and running the Anganwadi centre, selecting and paying the Anganwadi worker, arranging for nutrition if necessary and planning and implementing future activities. It is for this reason that bringing about the participation of the community in the scheme at every stage is essential.

What does community participation really mean in practical terms? Many people may feel that if the community agrees to adopt a programme planned by the government, and help in its implementation, community participation has been achieved. This can be the case with ICDS also. However, there are many reasons why this kind of community participation does not prepare people to ultimately take charge of the programme.

1. If programmes are planned and designed by outsiders, they are not always appropriate to meet the real needs of the people. When such programmes fail, the people are blamed for not participating properly. There are many experiences which show this.

   In a certain district, an agency wanted to implement a rural development programme for tribal women and children. The agency felt that the women of the area should become involved in dairying, so that they would have a source of income as well as be able to improve the nutrition of their children. A dairy farm was set up and the women were offered loans to buy cows. Still, hardly any women came forward to participate in the scheme. It was only when this went on for a year that the agency thought of finding out why the women were not interested. With great difficulty, they were able to learn that milk was considered some form of bad secretion among these tribals and they preferred to keep away from it.

   Community participation must therefore include participation of the people concerned in planning the scheme.

2. If people are expected to be involved only in receiving the benefits of a government scheme, they will gradually become more and more dependent on the government to do what they can do themselves. This is very dangerous because if the government policy suddenly changes, or if a resource crunch leads to a decision to close the

scheme, people will be left vulnerable and helpless.

Community participation must therefore include opportunities for people to use the scheme as and how they need it, so that it becomes a tool for making them independent rather than dependent.

3. In cases where people have been asked to participate in implementing a government scheme, women from well-to-do families and other such powerful groups come forward and volunteer to participate. The very poor people do not have the time or the resources to be able to come forward on their own. As a result, the benefits of the scheme go mainly to those who are already rich, thus widening the gap between the rich and poor, the powerful and powerless.

Community participation must therefore include monitoring of the scheme by the poor and powerless groups in the community, so that they can control the way the scheme is implemented, and the way in which benefits are shared.

If we look at the way in which community participation in development has come about in various schemes, we can identify three stages.

First stage : Government are the planners and implementators, people are the beneficiaries.

Second stage : Government and people are partners in planning and implementing the scheme.

Third stage : People control, plan and implement the scheme, government acts as a resource.

Most of our early development schemes, like the mother's health and nutrition programme, were in the First stage. The ICDS has been intended to start at the Second stage and reach the Third stage.

Community participation in the scheme is therefore, essential to ensure that ICDS is a programme where government and people are partners in development. At the same time, the scheme must be implemented in such a way as to prepare, enable and empower the community to take the complete responsibility for the programme in the long run.

Community participation is essential to :

-   Bring about lasting and long-term change in the situation of women and children.
-   Make the programme more suited to the real needs of the community.
-   Make the programme self-sustaining, even if government aid is withdrawn;
-   Help the people to become independent, self-reliant and capable of taking control over their own lives.

METHODS:

1. This session can be run in 45 minutes.

2. Since the situation of women and children has been the starting point of the course, you can ask learners to enumerate the main factors and their causes. Each learner in the large group could contribute one factor, or provide one link in the chain of causation. Put their answers down on a chart as brief points linked with arrows. At the end, link the major factors together. You can also prepare the chart showing the web of factors before the session, and show it at the end, but it is more effective if the learners themselves participate in preparing the chart during the session.

3. Ask learners how the ICDS programme hopes to tackle the situation.

4. Introduce the main arguments in favour of community participation one by one. Ask learners to supply examples and experiences as and where they can.

5, To sum up the session, ask learners to contribute the reasons why community participation is essential for ICDS. Put the points on a chart. This chart, and the one showing the three stages of community participation can remain on the walls of the training hall until the end of the module.

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ASSESSMENT

1. Each learner should be able to give at least three reasons why community participation is essential for ICDS.

RESOURCE MATERIAL

There is a very large body of writing on people's participation in development. You could prepare your own reading list from the library at your training centre. A good start could be made with the following books.

1. Chambers, Robert, 1983. *Rural Development - Putting the Last First*.

2. FAO, 1973, *Peoples' Participation in Development. Proceedings of the Asian Region Workshop*.

SESSION 2

OBJECTIVES

1. To look at the experiences of community participation in ICDS.
2. To learn about the role of the Anganwadi worker in mobilising community participation in ICDS.

CONTENT

Since the ICDS is a programme designed to be a people's programme, it has certain built-in mechanisms to make it easier to involve the community. These are :

1. The Anganwadi worker is herself a member of the community, and is a volunteer rather than a government employee.

2. There is a provision for a village-level committee to supervise the implementation of the programme and provide guidance to the ICDS functionaries.

3. The programme envisages active support from Mahila Mandals and local groups for its implementation.

4. The nutrition and health education components are meant for all the women in the community, and these sessions are meant to provide an opportunity for other than direct beneficiary women to get involved in the programme.

5. The implementation of the scheme, right from the stage of selection of beneficiaries, requires that the worker make home visits. This ensures that women who would not otherwise come forward can become involved.

7. The training of ICDS functionaries lays stress on building an understanding and skills in working with the community.

Persons and institutions who are involved in planning, monitoring and evaluation of the ICDS programme have been looking at the various ways in which ICDS projects in different parts of the country have been working to mobilise the community to take responsibility for the project. They have found some common problems.

Second stage : Government and people are partners in planning and implementing the scheme.

1. The village-level committees which are supposed to oversee the functioning of the scheme, have not been successful in many cases. Either these committees have not been formed at all, or if they have, they do not take enough interest in the activities of the project. Where the committees do exist, they have become dominated by rich and influential people, who have been the ones to come forward and volunteer their services. These people do not always understand the needs or share the concerns of the poorest in the community, who are the main focus of ICDS.

2. Most people in the community think of ICDS as another government scheme. They do not know that it is meant to be owned and run by them and for them, and so they come forward only to avail of the benefits and not to take responsibility for it.

3. The scheme in many cases is implemented as a rigid package of services, on a "take it or leave it" basis, just like other government schemes. Few workers have made any use of the chance to make changes in the way the scheme is run, to better suit the conditions in a particular place.

Several suggestions have been made to overcome these and other problems, to ensure that the community participate to the fullest possible extent in planning, implementing and supervising the programme. We also have the experience of several non-governmental agencies who have been able to implement development

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programmes as partners with the community. In some states, ICDS projects are also implemented by these agencies. All these experiences can be put to work to help make the ICDS a people's programme and ensure that right from the initial stage, the community is involved with the scheme - from selecting the work, deciding on the location of the centre, running the centre, taking day-to-day decisions and planning for the future.

1. Village-level committees should be formed as the first step in starting a centre. When selecting people to join this committee, care can be taken to see that it includes more persons belonging to the poorest families.

2. The process of conducting a house-to-house survey and identifying beneficiaries should be used as a tool for creating awareness about the programme among the community, and for organising people, particularly women from poor families, to participate.

3. The ICDS worker, particularly the Anganwadi worker, must make an effort to understand the community - the groups which exist, which are the powerful groups and which are the powerless, what are the existing forces for change, what are the real problems and needs of the women and children and so on. Enough time must be given to the worker to complete this process and to build a friendly relationship with at least some of the families whose children will be attending the centre, before the centre is actually opened.

4. As far as possible, the Anganwadi worker should work through community groups, particularly women's groups and Mahila Mandals when they exist, she must try to understand the composition of these groups and try to see that women from the poorest families get a change to participate. Where Mahila Mandals do not exist, the Anganwadi worker can form one, and see that it includes a majority of women from the poorest families, not only those from well-off families who have more free time and who will therefore be more interested in coming to meetings.

5. The Anganwadi worker should keep the community informed about the project in the initial stages,. She should see that the community knows about the aims and objectives and the ways in which their participation is neces- sary for success. In later stages, she should tell everyone, (not just parents of children who come to the centre, or persons in positions of power and authority), about the progress of the project, and the various successes and problems of the centre. She should solicit, appreciate and encourage the community's suggestions and com- ments regarding the functioning of the centre, rather than treating them as interference or fault finding.

6. As far as possible, the Anganwadi worker should try to make the services available at the centre suited to the specific needs of the community. She can do this only if she can determine what the needs are, and if she gets support from her Mukhyasevika and CDPO, in making some changes in the structure of her work to meet the needs.

The most important factor, which will determine how effective any or all of these strategies will be, is the attitude of the project functionaries, particularly the Anganwadi worker. She must herself understand why it is important for the community to become involved in the project. She must realise that she is accountable to the community rather than to the government, and that all the other persons in the project office are there to support her in her efforts to serve the community. If the Anganwadi worker thinks of ICDS as a government programme, then, even if she carries out various strategies, she will not be able to bring about a situation where the people genuinely feel that they own the project, and ultimately become enabled to take charge of it.

METHODS

1. This session can be run in 90 minutes with a short break midway.

2. The methods used to deal with the content should vary according to whether the learners are newly recruited Anganwadi workers, or have some previous experience. In the former case, the trainer will have to present a brief overview of the built-in mechanisms for eliciting community participation within ICDS, as well as what has been observed in various reviews. If the group has some experience of running an Anganwadi centre, then

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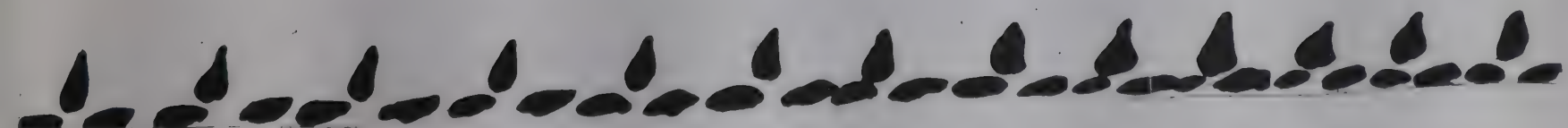
small groups could discuss how the built-in mechanisms have been operationalised by them in their centres and the problems they have faced, After the small groups have made their presentations in the plenary, the trainers should consolidate by collating the common problems arising out of the presentations, and putting them on a chart.

3. After a short break, the second phase of the session can focus on solutions. This can again be in the form of a small group exercise, with each group focusing on one aspect (lack of functioning of village committees, lack of involvement of women's groups, attitude of the community) and working out detailed strategies. The trainer can supplement these after the presentations, with case-studies of successful strategies being implemented in various projects around the country, and in similar projects being implemented by voluntary agencies.

4. To round up the session, the trainer can again emphasise that the attitude of the Anganwadi worker (and, of course, other project functionaries) is the crucial element in eliciting community participation. This point can be emphasised in the case studies as well.

5. If the learners are women with experience of work, it is likely that the negative aspects of the issue, in terms of the difficulty of getting the community to participate, will be raised. For instance, learners may say that people lack interest, they are impatient, interested in immediate material gains and so on. It is very important for the trainer to facilitate an analysis of the various reasons behind non-participation, in the light of discussions in Session 1. Positive experiences, of which there are several even in government run ICDS projects, should be brought to the front.

6. This session should generate a large number of innovative strategies and ideas for actualising community involvement in various aspects of the project. It is very important to keep a record of these (you can collate all the charts and presentations to make a master chart). These points will provide linkages to later sessions focusing on different aspects in more detail, and it may be possible to practice some of the strategies suggested by the group during the field placement.

ASSESSMENT

1. Learners should be able to enumerate the built in mechansisms of eliciting community participation in ICDS.

2. Each learner should be able to list 4-5 strategies to bring about effective community participation.

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Several useful case-studies are available in the NIPCCD publications on *"Management of Community Participation in ICDS"* (Technical Bulletin No.6), and *"Compendium of Reading Material on Community Participation in Child Welfare and Development"*..

SESSION 3

OBJECTIVE

To look at various areas of community participation in the ICDS programme.

CONTENT

Before we talk about the various ways in which the community can participate in the ICDS programme, we must have a clear idea of what is meant by the world 'community'.

In one sense, everyone who lives in the village or settlement where the Anganwadi centre is located, is a matter of the community for the Anganwadi worker. However, the community is not homogenous - it is made up of groups which can be classified on the basis of their class, caste, age, situation, needs, aspirations, and so on. From the view point of the ICDS worker, the community can be classified into groups like the following:

- children who come to the centre
- other children
- mothers/parents of the children who come to the centre
- all women in the village
- families which are poor
- families which own land
- functionaries in other
- teachers, doctors and other educated and professional persons.
- members of panchayats/ muncipalities
- members of panchayats/ muncipalities
- members of panchayats/ muncipalities
- young people
- members of voluntary agencies.

Even though the ICDS programme is specifically targeted at the poorest and most deprived families, other groups also have important roles to play in achieving the goals of the programmes.

We can look at some of these roles.

Kind of involvement	Who can be involved.
1. Selecting the Anganwadi worker.	Village Committee
2. Introducing the Anganwadi worker to the community, in her new role.	Elders in the community, members of the panchayat, School teachers, functionaries of other government programmes.
3. Conducting the survey	Women's groups, youth groups, functionaries of other projects.
4. Selecting a location for the Anganwadi centre.	Parents of children who will be coming to to the centre, members of youth clubs or women's groups, members of voluntary agencies who work with poor families.

5. Helping to build and maintain the Anganwadi centre	Parents of children coming to the centre, rich families and persons who own land, members of panchayats or the local administration.
6. Providing facilities llike drinking water and toilets, playgrounds, storage space	Rich families who own land and have extra space, local school- teachers and doctors.
7. Keeping the Anganwadi clean	Parents and elder sisters and brothers of children at the centre, members of the family who have the time, and members of youth groups.
8. Inviting community members to visit the centre	Members of panchayat and local administration parents, member of the Anganwadi workers family.
9. Organising the pre-school activities at the centre	Parents, older persons and retired persons, young people.
10. Providing materials for activities.	Rich families, principals of primary schools, panchayats, administration, parents.
11. Helping in cooking at the centre	Parents, older relatives of the children at the centre, other women who do not have children of their own.
12. Contributing food for the centre.	Parents, rich families.
13. Identifying malnourished women and children	Local doctors, members of other government and non-government programmes, women of village
14. Helping to organise health camps.	Health workers of government and non-governmental programmes, young people, school teachers.
15. Helping to organise Mahila Mandals.	Workers in other programmes, workers from NGO's, mothers of children who come to the centre, women members of panchayats.
16. Monitoring and planning activities.	Members of village committees, Mahila Mandals, parents.

This is by no means a complete list, either of the ways in which the community can be involved, or of the people who can become involved in various activities. Parents of the children who come to the centre can be involved in almost every activity. However, there are some things that must be kept in mind when soliciting the involvement of this group.

1. The children who come to the centre are mostly those from the poorest families of the village. When trying to involve their parents, care must be taken to see that the burden of poor parents is not increased by asking them to contribute materials or food for the centre. Very often, community programmes try to involve poor people by asking them to contribute their time. Remember, this time will be taken away from activities which are essential for the family's survival. It will be easier for these mothers to become involved in activities which do not entail expense, and do not require them to leave their work undone.

2. Remember that participation has many different aspects, apart from contributing time or resources. Very poor families are able to participate by using the services, talking to other about the scheme, monitoring the activities of the AWW, giving her feedback about the progress of the scheme, and helping to solve problems that may arise.

There is another important point with regard to various activities and people's participation in them. In our earlier session, we discussed the three stages of community participation. The degree and extent of community participation in the programme cannot be estimated only by the number of activities which have the visible presence of the community since this presence is usually concentrated in using service. To assess how much and how effectively the community participates in the programme, we should ask the following questions :

1. Are all groups in the community aware that they are partners in the programme, or do they think it is just another government programme?

2. Are all functionaries in the project aware that they are partners of the community, and not the sole owners and implementers of the schemes?

3. Are the services provided at the centre used by all groups in the community? Are they accessible to the poorest and most powerless?

4. Do all groups in the community make demands and suggestions related to the programme?

5. Are these demands and suggestions accepted and acted upon?

6. Are local community groups like women's groups, youth groups, men's groups and panchayats involved in planning for the scheme?

7. Do all groups in the community contribute in some way? What about the most powerless groups like Scheduled Castes, Tribals, Landless, widows and unmarried mothers?

METHODS

1. This session will take about 90 minutes with a short break in the middle.

   Since the previous sessions have discussed how people can become involved in different activities, this section can be designed as a recapitulation and consolidation of earlier learning.

2. The question "What is meant by community" can be asked in the large group. Encourage each trainee to add one point to the list and write all the answers on a chart. You can cluster the answers together into persons directly involved with the programme, persons indirectly involved, functionaries of other programmes and so on, as you write. Label the clusters after adding any groups the trainees have not mentioned.

3. Small groups can work on the task of identifying the various ways in which different sections of the community can become involved in the programme. You can divide the task on the basis of persons to be involved, with one group discussing and listing ways in which parents can be involved, another group looking at ways in which rich families can be involved and so on. Alternatively, different small groups can discuss and list various ways of community involvement in different aspects of the ICDS programme (preschool activities, nutrition, health camps and so on). Each group can bring its list back to the plenary and you can consolidate them into a frame work of "who can do what" and add in anything you think has been missed. The entire exercise should take about an hour.

4. You can ask the group to identify the persons whose involvement is likely to be higher than that of others - parents, members of panchayats and the administration and so on. This will be a useful link with later sections focusing on these specific groups.

5. Add a word of caution about involvement of poor families and invite the group to supplement this from their own experience - have they found this to be the case? Do they know of other cases where the inability of poor people to become involved has been criticised as "lack of interest"?

6. You may want to think about the positioning of this session in relation to the earlier one (on general aspects of

mobilising community involvement) If this is a group with experience of running centres, learners would find it easier to start from specific activities and go to generalities. You could link the "who does what" aspect to the built-in mechanisms for eliciting community participation in ICDS. and then ask small groups to list the problems they face in operationalising the strategies.

ASSESSMENT

1. Each learner should be able to list 3-4 ways in which different groups in the community can participate in the scheme, as well as 3-4 ways of involving the community in each of the services (nutrition, preschool etc.)

2. Learner should be able to prepare a checklist to assess the extent of community participation.

3. At the end of this session, each learner could be asked to write a short essay (of about 500 words) on helping the poorest families to participate in centre-level activities. These essays could be read out before beginning the next day's activities.

SESSION 4

OBJECTIVE

Learning about Women's Groups as vehicles for community participation in ICDS.

CONTENT

The women and children of the community, particularly those from the poorest families, are the main focus of ICDS. As discussed earlier, although other groups in the community have important roles to play, women, especially those whose children attend the centre, are the most important partners for the Anganwadi worker. Since they are the persons most affected and most marginalised by the present situation, they will also be the ones who have the greatest stake in changing it. For this reason, not only are poor women the most central group in the community for the ICDS worker, they are also the most likely to be committed to action for long-term and lasting change in the situation.

Regardless of the income, status or caste of a family, the women are the weakest since, as we discussed at the start of this course, they usually lack the resources, skills and strength to act for their own development. In such situations, a group is much more likely to be effective in bringing about change. Many experiences have shown that poor rural women who feel small, weak, vulnerable and powerless, begin to feel more self-confident when they become members of a group and take part in group activities. They gather strength from the group and develop an awareness of common issues and interests. As members of a group, women can go through a systematic process to analyse their own situations and work out what can be done to solve their problems.

It is important to remember that the objective of forming and working through womens groups is not only to improve the delivery of services or to lighten the load of the Anganwadi worker. It is also to enable women to come together, share and analyse their experiences, gain self-confidence and collective strength and to act to solve their own problems. In this way, they will become enabled to use ICDS and other development programmes as resources available to them, to be utilised and to be managed by them according to their needs.

Anganwadi workers can help women's groups to achieve all these objectives through the following processes :

1. Getting women together into an effective and functional group.
2. Helping them to identify the various factors which keep them in their present situations, so as to set objectives for change.
3. Identifying resources for change and making a plan.
4. Allocating responsibilities.
5. Designing the activities at the centre, and making a plan for monitoring them.

Some villages may already have Mahila Mandals or women's groups organised by voluntary agencies before the ICDS came on the scene. In such cases, the Anganwadi worker can look carefully at these groups and try to understand them.

- what kind of women make up the group ?
- what is the objective of the group?
- how many women from the poorest families are members of the group?
- how active is the group?

In many cases, even if the group has been formed earlier, one may find that it is essentially a group of poor women. This would be the case in groups formed under the DWCRA scheme, or in beneficiaries' groups formed by NGOS. These groups may already be functioning, that is, thinking and working together. In such cases, the AWW would have to introduce herself to the group, and discuss the ICDS programme - its aims and objectives, the services and how
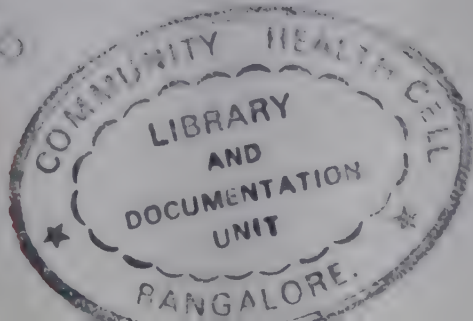
the group can participate, so as to develop a common plan for action.

In other cases, the AWW may find a mixed group, of women from both poor and rich families. This may even be the case if she tries to form a group herself. It is usually women from better-off families who will be able and willing to help in the initial stages - to find a place where the AWW can have a meeting, to set a time, to inform others and so on. It may happen, although not always, that the participation of these women will make the poor women reluctant to come forward. It would help if the AWW first met some of the poor women and spoke to them separately. Even if the Mahila Mandal has some women from well-off families, or if some are eager to become members of the group, there is no need for them to be excluded. There are many common problems and concerns shared by all the women in a community, regardless of their economic status - the situation of children is one of these.

Before going on to discuss how to form women's groups, we must first understand what a group is. A group is not just a collection of people who come together for a meeting or at the Anganwadi centre on the day of immunisation. A collection of people can be called a group if

- they come together to work for a common purpose;
- the members have a common interest;
- members meet regularly and participate actively.
- membership has some rights and duties.
- members communicate freely and openly..
- there are one or more people who take leadership.
- the members act collectively, and
- there is a feeling of one-ness.

The size of the group should be small enough to allow all members to interact among each other, and large enough to allow some effective actions to be taken.

It is important to remember that groups take time to form and grow. It is not enough to identify all the ''beneficiaries'' and write their names in a register. As the degree of common understanding among the members grows and deepens, as self confidence increases and the group is able to achieve some success in planning and implementing some action, the group grows stronger. The process can be expected to take at least a year.

As the organiser and promoter of the women's group, the role of the Anganwadi worker is very crucial. If she forms the group merely to meet her job requirement, the group may not last long. There are several experiences which bear this out.

An institute for non-formal education had a target of 50 women's centres for each year. They appointed a local women as a coordinator in each area. The coordinators were promised an honorarium of Rs.100/- a month, and were trained to organise groups. After the coordinator repeatedly approached the women, a few centres were started. Because there was so much emphasis on teaching reading and writing, which was the institute's objective, the women felt alienated and the groups did not last long. The members soon realised that the aim of the coordinator was to start the centre rather than cater to the women's needs.

This story shows that the importance of group formation lies in the response to the interests of all the members and not only the needs of the organiser or external agency. When the need to be organised is felt and recognised by all members, the group becomes strong.

If the organiser, in this case the AWW, realises the importance of each woman in the group and believes in their capacity to become an effective group, she has a better chance of success.

The background of the group organiser is an important factor in the initial stages of group formation. The more similar the background of the organiser to that of the women she wants to organise, the greater her chance of success.

A middle-class, educated social worker tried to organise some slum women to take action to solve the problem of wife-beating and drunkenness. Even though she was very sincere, the slum women did not want to share their problems and feelings with her, because they were not sure that she would understand them. The social worker then decided to work closely and intensively with Radha, one of the women in the slum, who was going through the same problem. When Radha was convinced that women like her could do something about this problem if they came together, she talked to the other women. Radha's words made more impact on the women, who also shared their experiences openly and a group was formed to deal with the problem.

This is the reason that the ICDS programme demands that a woman from the same community be selected as the Anganwadi worker. Since she already knows many of the women and their problems it will be easier for her to get the group together. As one of them, she will be more acceptable to the group than the Mukyasevika, who may be an outsider.

It has been observed with many women's groups in the early stages, that they would rather had the Mukhyasevika telling them what to do, rather than discuss their problems with the Anganwadi worker, who may be younger than them. The group must be helped to confront why they prefer to rely on others to take their decisions for them, and the consequences if this process continues. If the AWW can show by her actions and behavior that, rather than trying to be their 'boss' she is genuinely interested in becoming their partner in running the centre, the group will grow in self-respect and become stronger and more mature.

In order to become an effective organiser, it is very important to keep in mind that :

*   Each woman in the group is equally important.
*   The participation of each person is as important as the participation of the organiser.,
*   Those who do not want to join may have logical reasons; they must be understood rather than condemned or ignored.
*   It takes time for a group to form, so women have to be repeatedly approached and the organiser has to be patient.
*   The organiser must help women with their problems and stand by them in their difficulties, otherwise she can not gain their confidence.
*   The organiser should organise the group to serve the interests of the women themselves, rather than for any outside interests.
*   She should help the group to take decisions for themselves rather than take decisions for them.
*   The organiser must be willing to become a part of the group, rather than the 'boss'

METHODS

1. This introduction to women's groups in the ICDS can be run as a session of about an hour.

2. On the basis of what has been discussed about community participation in earlier sessions, you could ask the learners to say why they think women's groups are important. Put down the points on the board or a chart to collate them.

3. If some of your learners have experience as organisers of women's groups, either for ICDS or in any other context, you could ask them to share the way in which they took the group through the initial steps. Use this as the basis for focusing on the role of the AWW vis-a-vis women's groups. Put down the steps clearly on a chart - they will be links to the next session on steps in forming a group.

4. Ask your learners to think about all the groups they are aware of and put their answers down on a board. Now ask them to say what distinguishes these groups and makes them different from a mere collection of people (say, a crowd of people buying supplies at a ration shop or travelling in a bus). Ask each learner to contribute one point, and organise them into clusters to cover the main characteristics of groups.

5. You can use the case studies in the content, or others from your experiences, to highlight some of the major characteristics of groups (common interest, leadership, unit etc.) Small groups can take up each case study before the larger groups in a panel discussion format with some time for questions or comments at the end. However, if you decide on this method, remember to allot more time for this session.

ASSESSMENT

1. Learners should be able to list the reasons why women's groups are important for ICDS, and the steps in forming a group.
2. Learners should be able to specify the main characteristics of a group.
3. Learners should be able to prepare checklist on "How to be an effective organiser/"
4. Ask learners at the close of this session to write a short (500 word) essay on an instance in their experience where collective action by women was successful in solving a problem.

SESSION 5

OBJECTIVE

To learn in more detail about the steps in forming a women's group.

CONTENT

There are many experiences of forming groups which we can learn from. The following simple steps may be of help to the Anganwadi worker in her efforts to initiate a women's group.

Step1 When she first starts works, the Anganwadi worker should go from house to house and meet as many of the women as possible. One of the members of the village committee, if it exists, or her supervisor, or functionaries of health or DWCRA projects can help her to identify the poorest families, and introduce her to them.

Step 2 Talking to the women informally will help the worker to understand at least some of their problems and issues. She can tell them about ICDS, and of her intention to form a women's group to help the programme achieve its objectives.

Step 3 After talking to a number of women, the AWW can decide on the date, time and place for a first meeting, depending on what is convenient for the women. While visiting homes, the AWW should also talk to the men of the family and let them know clearly about the purpose of the meeting and the importance of women attending the meeting.

Step 4 At the first meeting, which will be conducted by the AWW, the group can be told about the ICDS programme and the ways in which they can benefit from it. The AWW should start by helping the women to identify their problems, particularly with regard to the situation of children. She can share the survey form with them and explain how the information collected in the survey will be useful in planning the activities at the centres.

Step 5 The AWW can seek the help of the women in filling the survey forms. Responsibilities can be divided and strategies for collective efforts to fill the forms can be worked out (detailed methods will be discussed in the next section of this manual).

Step 6 The survey forms can be filled and the data shared at the next meeting. The discussions at this and the next few meetings will focus on problems and possible solutions - children's health, education, drinking water, immunisation and the like. Once again, the AWW can present ICDS as a resource which can be used by the group to solve these problems.

Step 7 The group will now be able to work out some norms for itself - when and where to meet, what activities to take up, and how to participate in the activities at the centre. By this time, the group will be ready to take up some action-planning in relation to specific problems. The Anganwadi worker will have to help them to look for the root causes of their problems rather than stop at superficial solutions. For instances, she can help them to analyse how ICDS can be used to provide both solutions to immediate problems, as well as becoming a tool for long - term change.

Step 8 The process of meeting frequently to discuss their own lives and analyse their own reality should help the group to become stronger. The AWW also shares her own experiences as a woman and helps others to see the commonalities in all their experiences. Each member should now feel free to express herself to others both inside and outside the group.

Step 9 By the time the Anganwadi centre starts functioning, the AWW is able to work out specific responsibilities with the women's group - for bringing the children to the centre, explaining to others about what is happening, talking informally to other women to organise health activities, organising small neighborhood meetings to meet the

Mukhyasevika and have sessions on various aspects of health and nutrition and so on.

The above steps may seem as if the process of group formation is always smooth and quick. Actually , these steps may take as long as several months. In many cases, the AWW .may have to start the centre before the women's group is established. In either case, she may face several problems in getting the women to come together,.

1. Very often, women express their difficulty in finding time to attend the meeting. If the AWW does not deal with this issue effectively, the group may never be formed. One method is to have a discussion on the daily routine of each member of the group, including the AWW herself. This will help the women to recognise that all members have equally tight schedules. Women who come regularly for meetings in spite of their work loads can talk about why they come, how they manage their responsibilities etc. It may also help if those who do have some free time can volunteer their services to take the responsibility of informing others about meetings, preparing for the meeting and so on.

2. There may be some women, who even after a discussion like the one suggested above, may refuse to come for meetings. This could be because she genuinely feels that her participation in the group will not be important and she will be neglected. In this situation, the AWW with the help of other women in the group, should meet this woman at her home and try to convince her that her presence is very important. There may be other women in the group who have the same feeling of being looked down on and neglected, but who do not express it openly. A frank talk about such feelings will help to build self respect and solidarity.

3. In some cases, the resistance to join the group may come from prejudices against certain individuals who have already joined and who are active in the group. The AWW must always try to discuss this point openly. Women must look at their values, attitudes and interests in relation to others, and the group must come to a decision on how to tackle the issue.

4. In some cases, the men of the area, particularly husbands, resist the participation of women in group meetings and activities. It is very important for the AWW to discuss the rationale behind for the women's group, with the men, at a very early stage of her work in the village, Usually, it is possible to make some men come out in support of their wives' involvement in the group, although most are indifferent and some are actively hostile. Keeping the men informed, through the women themselves, is very important for the success of the group.

5. It may be difficult to keep the group together and sustain the interest of the members if meetings are only organised round discussions and talk. The AWW must help the group to tackle small and manageable problems which can be successfully solved by group members. The experiences of working together will give the group the strength and confidence to take on bigger issues in the future. This issues discussed and taken up may involve women in ways other than their role as members of the ICDS programme.

Of course, to carry out the steps in forming a women's group, and in tackling the various problems that may arise, the AWW will need the help, understanding and support of others in the ICDS structure, particularly the Mukhyasevika.

It is important for the entire group to monitor their own growth and functioning, so that they can consciously move towards becoming a strong and united team. The AWW can share some indicators with the group. At regular intervals, the group can look at all these and grade themselves.

Some good indicators of a strong woman are :

1. A constant membership of not less than 10 women.
2. Initiative in regularly attending meetings.
3. Everyone speaks and participates freely in the meetings.
4. Members are open with each other.
5. Decisions are made by consensus after discussion.
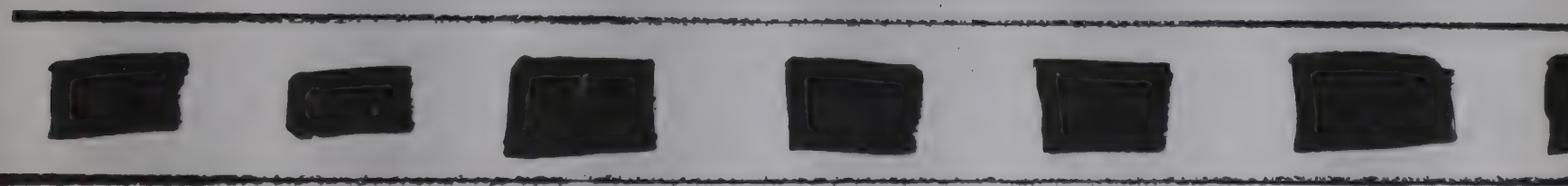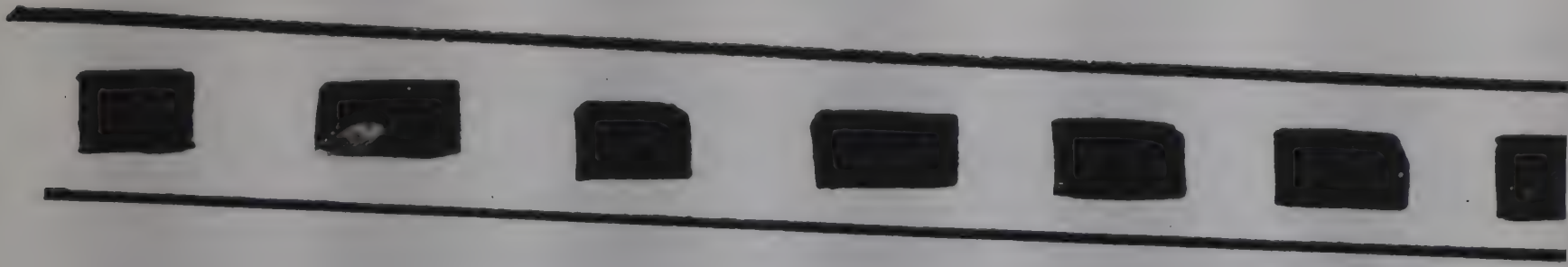
6. The group takes action together on its decisions.
7. There is shared leadership.

METHODS

1. This content can be covered in a session of 90 minutes, with a short break in the middle.

2. Ideally, this session should be run by a team of trainers who have some practical experience as organisers. If there are women among the learner group who have been organisers or members of women's groups, they can each be invited to talk about the steps that were taken to form the group. Trainers can keep note of the main points. The main steps can be put on a chart and matched with a chart which has been prepared earlier, with points as given in the content. This will make the session more 'alive', as well as emphasise the fact that there is no ready-made formula for forming a group.

3. The trainer or experienced group organisers can then talk about the problems they have faced in organising groups, and strategies they have adopted for tackling these.

4. In the case of a learner group with absolutely no experiences of working with groups, the session will have to be run by the trainers alone. If none of the trainers at the training centre has hands on experience as an organiser, it is worth the trouble to try and invite some resource persons who will share their experiences with the group. The trainer who is coordinating the session will have to round up the discussions by emphasising that organising groups is a skill that can come only with practice. The best guarantee for an effective group is the attitude of the AWW.

5. To help the group think about strategies for tackling problems in getting the group together, the trainer can ask those of the learners who have experience of working with groups, to share their experience through role-plays, depicting problems and solutions as they really happened. The learners who are going to present the role-play can be given some time to reflect on their experiences before reenacting strategies. If there are several role-plays, they could depict only the problems, and the entire group could brainstorm about solutions. Situations common to almost every group - opposition from well-off higher caste women to the participation of poor and Harijan women, opposition from husbands, the shy woman who does not open up, the busy woman who has no time for meetings - can all trigger interesting discussions.

6. For the theoretical input of this session to be effective, learners must get the feel of an active group. A field visit to a women's group in the neighbourhood, as observers at a meeting, would be very useful. Learners would have to be briefed about the points to be observed - the role of the organiser, the extent to which members are involved, the way the group plans its activities and so on. On returning from the visit, learners could present their observations in small groups and relate them to the previous discussions.

7. If it has not been possible to get women's group organisers as resource persons for this session, it may be organised at a later session. The persons could then interact with the learners in an open question and answer session.

ASSESSMENT

1. Learners should be able to prepare checklists for use during the field placement as well as their own villages, on steps in group formation and criteria for monitoring groups.

SESSION 6

OBJECTIVE

To learn about using the survey as a tool for group organisation and community awareness.

CONTENT

In earlier sessions we talked about how a women's group can become empowered through a process of understanding their own situation, analysing their problems and planning and implementing strategies to tackle them.

The first step in this process is to decide on a particular set of problems to be analysed and understood. In the case of ICDS, these would be problems related to the situation of women and children in the community, with particular focus on their health and development. Next, the group must put together what they already know about the problem, and assess what more needs to be known before they can plan to tackle it. Having collected all the needed information, the group can then move to looking at possible solutions and what actions can be taken. Then these actions are taken by the group.

For example, if the women decide that the major problem with their children is poor health, they will have to put down in detail what they already know about the situation - the kind of illnesses the children have, the time when they fall ill, the effects on the family's life and work and what is done to treat them. This helps in focusing on the problem in a concrete way. The AWW can take the lead in recording all the details and reading them out to the group for confirmation.

Next, the group can move to a more detailed analysis - for instance, to finding out what are the root causes of the various illnesses, what can be done to prevent and cure them and how the resources of the ICDS project can be put to use. At this stage also, the AWW can act as a resource person and source of information for the group, as well as making sure that everyone participates in the process of analysis, and everyone thinks about possible solutions. The group can then decide on what it wants to do - organise a health camp, educate others in the village about clean water, ensure that all the children are immunised and so on. Responsibilities for these activities can be divided among the group and action can be taken collectively, to be assessed later by the group. Further actions can then be planned and the group moves on. This whole process completes the cycle of participatory planning.

A very important step in this cycle is the collection of information about the situation as it exists. This is the purpose of the initial survey in ICDS. The information collected by means of the survey form can be put together to get a clear picture about the state of the community in terms of some basic developmental criteria, so that future action for the project can be planned.

The baseline survey is usually the first activity to be conducted by the newly selected Anganwadi worker. This is a very good chance for her to involve the group, which will also be in the very early stages of formation at this time. Discussing the survey can be a good activity for the first or second meeting, and the survey can be the first collective activity taken up by the group. This will have the following advantages:

1. It will help women to realise that they themselves have the skills to understand their own situation.

2. The data which is collected by the women themselves will be more relevant and accurate rather than if it is collected by outsiders.

3. The process of working together will build collective feeling and understanding in the group, and the women will feel more confident about participation in future activities.

4. The data will be used for preliminary planning of activities by the group. Data collected by them belongs to them, and in the same way, the programme will also belong to them right from the beginning.

The following steps can be taken :

1. The AWW must understand the survey form and how to fill it in.

2. At the meeting of the women's group, she shares the information about the survey and explains how the data will be used.

3. The group can now discuss how they can collectively participate in the survey process. They will have to see how many of them are literate and can read the form. Those who can not read and write need not be left out. It is very easy to fill most of the columns in the form using tally marks for number of persons, number of children, how many of them go to school and so on.

4. Other methods of data-collection can be discussed. Will it be possible to fill the survey forms through group discussion? Two or three of the women in the group can organise small meetings of 8 - 10 persons, one from each family. The AWW can also be present at this meeting, and forms can be filled up with some of the information. Later, home visits will complete the form.

5. Once the group has decided on the way in which they want to go about collecting information, they can divide responsibilities and fix dates - on what day will the AWW worker go to which part of the village? who will accompany her? How will the forms be filled?

6. The group can help in introducing the ICDS and the AWW to the community in the course of the survey. To do this, they must have a clear idea about the scheme. The AWW will have to prepare a short checklist of the main points to be covered and make sure that each person in the group is aware of all of them.

Along with the other members of the group, the AWW will be visiting the various families at their homes for the purposes for filling up the survey form. Remember :

1. Time the visit according to the convenience of the family.

2. The AWW should make sure to speak to a responsible person, a woman if possible. If men are at home, she should try to speak to men and women together.

3. The AWW should let the members of the women's group who are with her, take the lead in asking questions. She can fill in the answers on the form and only the questions which have been left out.

4. The AWW should also look carefully at the house and the family, and note down any additional information which may be of use - for example, how do the men behave with the women? How do the adults behave with the children? How clean is the house? What is being cooked for the family meal? All these points can later be discussed and analysed with the women's group, and can be a good indicator of the health and learning needs of the community.

5. While asking questions, the AWW should remember to be respectful and to avoid sounding like a 'government person'. She should tell the person being questioned what the information is going to be used for.
The work of collating the information collected in the survey forms and transferring it to the survey register should be done collectively at a meeting of the women's group. The Mukhyasevika can be present at this meeting and help the AWW to explain the significance of each piece of information. Some preliminary planning for the centre can also be done at this meeting, such as identifying the families who will send their children to the centre, setting priorities (for example, immunisation camp first or education about safe drinking water first?) and dividing responsibilities.
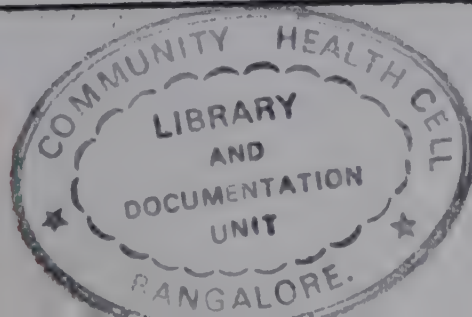
METHODS

1. This session is essentially a short theoretical input and should take about 45 minutes.

2. If a resource person in participatory planning can participate, it can enrich this session and learners can ask questions to clarify the steps involved.

3. The trainer should supplement the lecture with pre-prepared charts showing the steps in participatory planning and the steps in conducting a participatory survey.

4. At the end of the session, the learners can be asked to enumerate the points to be kept in mind when visiting a family and talking to an informant. This is essentially a recapitulation of discussions in the module on 'communication'. Points can be put on the board and collated.

5. An interesting exercise could be incorporated into this session. Divide learners into groups of 4-5. Designate one of them as the literate Anganwadi worker, and the others as illiterate women's group members. Groups can get together in the evening and night to design a survey form which can be used by all the women. Ask each group to put its form on a chart and hang up the charts next morning. If the best ideas are collated into one sheet, they can be tried out during the practice sessions or the field placement. Some possibilities - using pictures to indicate categories (men, women, children, school, immunisation etc.), using tally marks to fill in numbers, using symbols, marking the family being surveyed on an indicative map of the village instead of writing the name and so on. This exercise will help learners understand that illiteracy is not necessarily a barrier to participation.

ASSESSMENT :

1. Learners should be able to prepare their own checklists of steps in conducting a participatory survey and points to be kept in mind while conducting the survey,

2. At the end of this session, learners can write short (500 words) essays on how other community groups can be involved in the survey.

Note:

This session will have to be followed by a detailed discussion on the survey form, and practice in filling it up. For skill-building, learners can interview each other in pairs and groups. It may also be possible to talk to groups of women - perhaps the kitchen and support staff at the centre - to collect information about their families.

SESSION 7

OBJECTIVES

To learn about ways of building the capacity of the parents and community to help the all-round development of their children.

CONTENT

At the very beginning of this module, we talked about the fact, that ultimately, the responsibility for the development of children lies with the parents and community. Child development is not initiated at the Anganwadi centre, nor does it end there—if that was the case, children in villages where there is no Anganwadi centre would be doomed to be incomplete human beings. Even though the role of the ICDS and the Anganwadi worker is very important, we must keep in mind that the activities at the centre, whether preschool education, nutrition, immunisation or growth monitoring, only strengthen and take forward a process of development which starts at birth and which will continue even after the child leaves the centre at the age of six. Therefore, it is not enough to strengthen the capacity of the Anganwadi worker to be a good child development worker. For lasting and long-term change to come about, we must also simultaneously strengthen the capacity of parents and the community to become good child development workers.

There are three aspects to building this capacity - the parents and community must be aware of the need to support the physical, social, and emotional development of their children, they must know what to do to provide this support and they must have the skill and resources to do it.

The Anganwadi worker has a very important role to play in building the capacity of parents and the community in these ways. She can help them to look at and analyse the present situation and see the need to change it, get the knowledge needed to bring about the change and acquire the skill and resources to use the knowledge. For instance, she can share the information she and the women's group have collected about the nutritional status of the children of the community, to help everyone understand that many children are malnourished. She can tell them what she has learnt about malnutrition, and how it can affect the development of the child and lead to illness and even death. She can share the knowledge she has acquired during her training, about what to do to prevent and cure malnutrition, how to detect it at the earliest stage and how to take the help of ICDS and health services to fight it. She can demonstrate the skills she has acquired in cooking to preserve and enhance the nutritive value of foods, and she can give parents the chance to practice these skills for themselves. She can help the poorest members of the community, like members of the Mahila Mandal, to get information about various government schemes for income generation, and can help them to contact the relevant government or panchayat members. She can help small groups of women to start thrift cooperatives to save money so that they have a source of extra funds in times of crisis.

The objective of training the Anganwadi worker to build her capacity as a child development worker is therefore two-fold.

  to enable her to provide the appropriate inputs to help and strengthen the all-round development of children coming to the centre.
  to enable her to build the capacity of parents in the same way.

The ICDS scheme has some built-in opportunities for such capacity building to take place, through meetings of parents and community groups organised by the Anganwadi worker at which various aspects of child development can be taken up. These are a very effective way of involving members of the community and groups other than parents, women or youth groups, who may already be involved.

While choosing the topics for these session, the Anganwadi worker can use what she and the women's group have learnt about the needs of the community from the survey and their discussions. The knowledge of the women about the

situation, the problems they face in their families, the beliefs and attitudes of the community and the previous history of the community, can be a very important input in making these sessions relevant to the people who will attend them, rather than a mere repetition of what the Anganwadi worker has learnt in her training, or what she has been told to do by the Mukhyasevika. The Anganwadi worker can also talk about these sessions with the other development workers in the area, who will know the community and its problems - health workers, DWCRA Gram Sevika, field workers of NGO's and Panchayat members.,

Some of the topic which are relevant for many communities are :

- health and nutrition of children.
- care and nutrition for pregnant and nursing mothers
- need for early childhood stimulation
- importance of play in child development.
- care of infants
- immunisation
- growth monitoring as a tool for child development
- sanitation and clean environment
- socio - economic programmes for women
- child spacing and family planning.

To ensure that the session is a step towards building the capacity of the parents, it is important to remember that it is not only what is discussed, but also how it is discussed, that determines the outcome.

It may be helpful for the AWW to keep the following points in mind :

1. When choosing a topic, make sure that it represents a real learning need of the community, rather than your own interest.

2. When preparing for the topic, try to assess what you know about it. Do you need someone else to help you with information? You can talk to others, or invite them to come to the meeting and help you, as a resource person.

3. Remember, experts are not always educated outsiders or professionals. In many cases, persons from the community know a lot about a topic. A mother from a poor family whose child is the right weight for her age can be an excellent resource person for a session on practical nutrition. Ask her to share what she does to feed her family. Many tribal communities have food habits and cooking practices which are very scientific, but which are looked down upon by others. Discussing these will not only provide information to the community, it will also help them to recognise and value the knowledge and experience of their neighbours, instead of labeling them 'backward' or bad. The persons whose experiences are held up as models in this way gain confidence and self-respect, and can begin to see themselves as members of the community on an equal footing with others.

4. Prepare for the session - put down the main points of information on charts, collect any other things you may need (materials for demonstration, aids like growth charts, posters, pictures or models).

5. Decide when and where the session will be held. It should be accessible to all groups in the community, so it should be at a place where everyone can reach, and be accommodated, and at a time when it is convenient for everyone, including persons who go out to work or have household tasks to complete.

6. Inform everyone about the date, time and venue of the meeting, more than once if possible. Make sure you tell the people who are usually left out - the very poor families, the families which live in separate huts at the edge of the settlements, the families you do not see when you go to the village or who do not have children attending the centre.

7. Think carefully about the way people will sit at the session. Remember, everyone is a member of the community on an equal footing, and equally important for you. Try not to have different arrangements for different people

2. - it is better that everyone sits on the floor in a circle, rather than some in chairs and some on the floor.

8. Plan how you are going to conduct the meeting - what are the points you want to make, the sequence in which you will say them, and the words you will use. It is a good idea to practice with the women's group as an audience - they are your friends and can tell you whether your language is clear, whether what you say is making sense and whether it is interesting or not. Note their suggestions carefully and incorporate them into your preparation.

9. Give everyone a chance to participate - divide responsibilities with other members of the women's group. One person can be in-charge of the charts and posters and can hang them up and use a pointer to help people understand the pictures. Someone else can be in-charge of keeping an eye on the audience, noting who seems to be confused, bored or is trying to ask a question but does not have the confidence to do so. In such cases, she can draw your attention to the person. If the session includes demonstration of a skill, like preparing ORS or a weaning food, someone else can take the responsibility for seeing that materials needed for the demonstration are at hand. Another person can take the lead in actually doing the demonstration. Remember, you do not have to be the only person 'on stage' during the session - giving others the chance to take active roles will help to build their confidence, and lead to their greater participation in future activities.

10. If the session involves a large element of skill-building, remember that skill comes only with practice. Everyone must be given a chance to practice doing the activity to their own satisfaction. So if you are going to teach people how to make ORS, or how to assess the nutritional status of their children through upper arm circumference measurement, or make toys from waste material, make sure that you have enough time and enough material for everyone to practice. It would also be a good idea in such cases to keep the number of people at the session limited to 10 or 15, so that you and other members of the women's group who have the skill can supervise the practice and give individual attention.

11. The best judges of how effective your session was and how useful it will be to them, are the people who have attended. When you have finished, and when everyone has finished asking questions, you can ask people for their comments and suggestions for the next time. If someone is negative, do not react angrily or try to defend yourself. Note down what has been said and think about it later. See if it can be used to improve yourself. Remember that the opinion of each person, whether positive or negative, whether expressed in a confused way or clearly, is equally important for you and the programme.

12. To judge the long-term effects of your session, you and the members of the women's group, or others who have helped you to conduct the session, can talk to people informally when you get the chance, and find out if they have learnt something from it which they are able to use in their daily lives. This information can be discussed at subsequent meetings of the women's group, and will be the basis for planning the content and methods of future session.,

Most important of all, the Anganwadi worker must work collectively with the existing community groups, especially the women's group, at every step of planning, implementing and evaluating the session.

This is essential for

-   promoting and enabling collective ownership of the project.
-   ensuring that the women's group is strengthened.
-   ensuring that the session is relevant
-   bringing about long-term and lasting change in community situations.
-   ensuring that the process of learning is an empowering one rather than one which makes people feel helpless, ignorant or defensive.

METHODS

1. This content can be covered in a session of 90 minutes.
2. Much of the content is a recapitulation of what has already been discussed in the session on "Need for Community Participation" and the module on Communication. After a brief introduction by the trainer, establishing a

clear link between community education and community empowerment and ultimate ownership of the project, learners can be asked to discuss, step by step, ways in which they can ensure that these session fulfil the dual objectives of learning and empowerment. Give at least 40 minutes time for this exercise. You and other trainers can join the groups and ensure that the discussion is not superficial.

3. When groups come back together, ask each group to contribute one point at a time, and go round all the groups until new points stop coming. Since discussions in most groups would have followed the same pattern, this will ensure that learners do not get bored with hearing the same points repeated. You can write the points on a chart., in a predetermined sequence (before session, during session), after session, as in the content, sectional rather than in the sequence in which they come from the learners. This will make it easier for you when you sum up. Add the points you feel have been left out, and emphasise where necessary.

4. There should be a clear focus on collective efforts and collective ownership of the session, so you can go over the check-list once again at the end and underline ways in which this can be brought about.

5. This session should be an introduction to intensive skill-building through mock sessions with some of the learners taking the role of the community by turns, visits to nearby villages and communities to conduct sessions, and review and feedback by trainers about practice sessions.

6. Structure some time (at least 4-5 hours) to allow small groups of learners to discuss and list talking points for sessions, and prepare charts, posters or pictures for at least one specific session. This can be carried out under supervision during the field placement.

APPENDIX I
USING DIFFERENT TRAINING METHODS

LECTURE METHOD

This training method entails a trainer delivering a lecture (speech) to the learners. New information or concepts ca
be introduced through a lecture. It can arouse interest in the learners and set the stage for what is to follow next.
lecture can also be used to summarise the topic at the end of a session. It allows the trainer to cover a great deal o
material within a short span of time. A lecture can be supplemented with charts, projections, reading material
audio-visuals, demonstrations, etc. Reading materials can be used before, as well as after, a lecture and learners ca
be encouraged to ask questions during as well as at the end of a lecture.

A lecture can take a range of forms, depending on the lecturer as well as the learners and the subject. However,
this method, learners in the groups play a passive role. There is not much scope for an exchange of ideas, or partic
pation.

WHEN SHOULD LECTURES BE USED

A lecture is an appropriate training method in the following contexts:

1. Presenting new information and concepts in an organised way.
2. Identifying or clarifying problems or issues.
3,. Presenting analyses of a controversial issue.
4. Stimulating or inspiring the learners.
5. Encouraging further study or inquiry.

SOME TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE LECTURE

* The subject should be prepared ahead of the session.
* It should be clearly linked to the learning objectives.
* The introduction to the lecture should be challenging and stimulating.
* The trainer should be able to deal with the topic in depth within the stipulated time.
* The trainer should be prepared to tell the participants how the lecture is related to their learning objectives.
* It should motivate the learners immediately.
* Use of different aids can be made.
* Its content should be informative and sequencing should be clear.
* It should be attuned to the level of the learners.
* Learners participation should be elicited if the duration of the lecture is long.
* Eye contact with the learners is essential throughout the lecture.
* Proper seating arrangements should be made so that learners can see and hear the lecture.
* The trainer should be aware of his/her facial expressions and body movements during the lecture so as not
  distract the learners.
* Content should be emphasised and not dealt in a light vein.
* The trainer should avoid taking on the role of a preacher.
* The language of the lecture should be easy to understand. It should consist of short and correct sentences.
* The purpose of communicating information and ideas to the learners should always be kept in mind.

ADVANTAGES OF LECTURE METHOD

* Presentation of facts and opinions in an orderly, systematic manner.

* Learners can be stimulated and motivated to further study and inquiry.
* Large numbers of persons can attend.
* Information and concepts can be presented to learners who are not familiar with printed materials.

LIMITATIONS OF LECTURE METHOD

* Only the trainer's point of view and ideas are presented.
* Learners largely remain passive recipients.
* The impact of the lecture on the learners can not easily be gauged.
* Facts can be distorted by an irresponsible speaker.
* It can tend to satisfy the needs of the lecturer to lecture at the cost of the learning of the learners.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD

Group participation is the basis for small group methods. All members in the group can get an opportunity to share their experiences, opinions and ideas; they can disagree with the dominant main points. Such a method stimulates thinking and actively involves all members of the group, if used effectively.

However, this method is more time-consuming than the lecture. It can be most effectively used in a group of 25-30 members. In larger groups, promoting effective participation becomes problematic.

Certain conditions have to be met if small group discussion is to be an effective learning method. It is crucial to remember that effective facilitation of the small group is necessary when it is to be used as a learning method. The rationale for small group discussion should be clear.

The following are some of the main rationales for small group discussion :

* Clarification : mutual discussion helps clarify the issues and different positions on it.
* Opinion-building : learners can crystallise their opinion in a collective context.
* Clarification : small discussion helps clarify the issues and different positions on it.
* Expression : small group discussion can encourage expression of learners experiences and opinions.
* Involvement : it can be used to initiate and sustain learners involvement.
* Internalisation : it can facilitate internalisation of crucial ideas among learners.
* Building climate : it contributes to the building of a learning climate.

Different forms of small group discussions have been in use.

1. Buzz groups are short duration, three or four person groups used for a specific narrow purpose.

2. Syndicate groups are nothing but small group discussions.

3. Fish-bowl is when a small group discussion is observed by another group from outside; and then the outside group discusses, being observed by the first group.

LIMITATIONS OF SMALL GROUP

* It requires the presence of a facilitator, preferably one for each group.
* It can be very time-consuming.
* Learners may not engage in group discussion seriously.
* More space is needed to accommodate different small groups.

STRUCTURED EXPERIENCES

Structured experiences as a training method make deliberate use of 'experience' for learning. A structured and systematic mechanism of using experience for learning is created in this method. The theory of 'experiential learning' pro-

vides the basis.for this set of training methods.

The experience that constitutes the basis for learning can be of several types. It can be the experience of learner themselves; it can be the experience of persons other than the learners.

Use of other persons' experiences for learning is generally made through the case study method; a case study presen tation can be written as well as oral.

Learners can use their own past experience for learning. Small group events that use learners' past experience are quite common. Role-play is another popular method that uses learners' past experience for learning.

"Here-and-now" experience can also be created for learning - this is the shared experiences of learning during the training itself. Various exercises are used for creating an experience during training itself, and then learning from it

While the past experience of each learners is unique, the here -and-now experience can create a shared basis for learning. These experiences become common learning material, unlike past experience, which is mostly available with each only.

CASE STUDY METHOD

The case study method involves the use of real life experience of either an individual, a group or an organisation. other than the learners themselves. This could either be through an audiovisual presentation or through written documents. Depending upon the subject matter and learning objectives, case studies could either be content or process-based or a combination of both. For example, a case study can be the decision-making process in a women's group or choice of child health strategy, or both

The purpose of using a case study is :

1. To supplement certain information as well as theoretical concepts presented to a group of learners. In this way, it helps to elucidate various underlying principles, to further highlight and clarify certain critical issues as well as to present a living example of how those concepts apply.

2. In the event of understanding the dynamics of any particular situation (especially when it is real), it triggers a process of reflection and application on the part of the learners. They can draw parallels with their own sets of experiences or even see the main differences.

3. To discuss and further evaluate varying approaches used in similar or different contextual situations. Essen-tially, what it demonstrates is that there are various ways of perceiving a problem and handling it.

4. To sharpen learner's analytical and diagnostic skills. It is a good learning exercise and can help systematically build up critical faculties.

5. To expose different groups, for example illiterate tribal groups, to situations and examples of struggles that would serve as learning models for them.

6. To create new knowledge. Through a process of collective reflection and analysis, new theoretical construc-tions can emerge. Often, concepts which have emerged from practice are further refined through such a process.

STEPS

The use of the case study method can be done in the following steps:

*   reading or hearing a case study.
*   individual reflection
*   small group discussion (to explore the issue further)
*   extract insights

* collective analysis
* summarisation

ADVANTAGE

Case studies can contribute significantly to a process of :

1. Option-creating, evolving a wide range of methods and approaches to a similar problem.

2. Awareness raising : understanding the underlying causes and factors that have either enhanced or hampered a particular process.

3. Further developing planning and analytical skill: using other people's experiences as valuable insights and basis for learning.

4. Cognitive inputs : contributing to new understandings and conceptual frame works.

5. Drawing strength from the experience of others : sharing in similar experiences of others and realising that one is not alone in one's struggle gives renewed faith and confidence in one's work.

DISADVANTAGES

Case study as a method also faces certain limitations :

1. There can be occasions when the focus is shifted primarily to the subject matter and the feelings of the people involved are ignored.

2. Finding an appropriate and relevant case study is difficult. There is very little systematic documentation in the field of training. It is time-consuming to collect information and prepare case studies.

3. Case studies are written either by the persons involved in the process or any an outsider or jointly. They are, therefore, coloured by the perceptions, ideologies, feelings and experiences of the writers involved and can give distorted and subjective versions of a given reality.

FACILITATOR'S ROLE

The case study method involves a high degree of involvement and participation on the part of both the learners and the trainers. Asking questions, probing further, clarifying, seeking clarifications, inviting interpretations, drawing parallels between the existing reality and what is happening in the group are the various things that a facilitator does in this method.

The pace of case study analysis has to be maintained. What may work with one group of learners may be totally redundant for another group. The facilitator should therefore keep in mind the level of learners and the objectives to be achieved. In the absence of a readily available case study, the facilitators has to prepare one as well. Preparing and using case studies requires considerable skill.

ROLE PLAY METHOD

Role-Play is a structured experience in which learners get an opportunity to act out problems concerning human relations and human interactions before a group of co-learners and facilitators. It is a conscious attempt to examine the various roles played in actual life. This process is then subject to critical reflection through effective feedback given by both the observers and the actors.

Since actual or close-to-life situations are taken in the role-play, the dynamics of the various roles can be explored in depth. Role-plays also provide the opportunity for an exploration of various roles from some distance. This method also makes risk taking and spontaneous responses possible. Learners do not feel threatened as in a real situation.

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The emotions of the actors involved in the role-play determine the outcome of role-play. The outcome cannot be predicted or pre-determined. Learners get an opportunity for becoming a player, an observer, summariser, clarifier, etc. Besides, they also get an opportunity to practice new behaviours.

The role-play can be designed to facilitate understanding and raise awareness. It can also be used to practice some skills. For example, a role-play can be used to become aware of the power structure in a village and it can also be used to practise ways to confront that power structure.

FEATURES OF ROLE-PLAY

1. It is an activating, energising, involving and absorbing activity.

2. It provides opportunities for developing new insights and sensitivity by looking at oneself as well as others' point of view, feelings, behaviours and experiences.

3. It generates valuable data about human relationships and interactions and exposes learners to the dynamics of a situation.

4. It provides opportunities to bring out hidden attitudes and unexpressed feelings before the group for review, thus facilitating a process of checking one's perceptions and attitudes without fear of rejection. This facilitates practice of new behaviours leading to internalisation of learning.

5. It helps establish causality - why certain behaviours provoke certain response, etc.

6. It helps in identifying problems both at individual and group levels and analysing them.

7. It serves an evaluation function by facilitating individual and group change through feedback from others and through self-assessment.

STEPS IN USING ROLE-PLAY

1. The learning objective and subject matter should be specified before choosing a particular role-play.

2. The facilitator should identify problems or a situation that would be meaningful to the group and would meet the learning objectives.

3. The problem should be well-defined, specific and not too complex in structure. Otherwise it may not be understood by the actors and the observers.

4. For different roles to be played, individuals can either volunteer or decide among themselves or the facilitator may assign roles to different individuals.

5. If any individual is reluctant to portray a particular role, the facilitator should not force it on her. This may result in the individual feeling anxious, nervous and threatened, which will impair learning.

6. For learning to take place, the active involvement of the learners is essential. Each actor should be well briefed about the role to be played. This could be done separately. The observers should also be given clearly instructions about their role, what they have to observe and how they have to record it.

7. In setting the stage, the rationale of the role-play situation should be explained: what it is being used for, why, and what can be effected through it.

8. During the role-play, if a particular scene is being continued or stretched for too long, or an impasse has been reached, real feelings have begun to be developed or the purpose of the role-play has been achieved, the role-play should be tactfully stopped. Sometime the role-play can be stopped in between for sometimes in order to highlight a point and then continue further.

9. Time should be given to the participants to distance themselves from their roles after the role-play is over.

10. During the sharing and analysis session, the discussions should be focused on observations, feelings, understandings, and not on opinions or suggestions.

11. If the diagnosis of the problem opens up a whole new way of working, different role-play situations can be tried to practise new approaches or actions. This will help test the generalisations in more than a particular case.

FORMS OF ROLE-PLAY

There are various forms of role-play as learning methods:

a. Simple Role-Play

In this form a small group performs the role-play before the observers, or two persons role-play two different sets of characters and then interchange their roles.

The former helps to develop sensitivity to the feelings of other and the self. In the latter, it can be effectively demonstrated how diverse attitudes, feelings and personalities react to similar sets of situations. Both sets of reactions of the actors and the observers can lead to rich insights.

b. Multiple Role-play

In this, the same situation is enacted by different groups. This exercise could also be simultaneously done in different groups with observers and facilitators. They can then share their experiences and insight and compare data with one another. This can help highlight different sets of perceptions.

c. Socio-Drama

A role-play which focuses on a particular social issue can also be effectively demonstrated during a session. Participants can then collectively analyse it and discuss the relevant issues and related dynamics.

ADVANTAGES

Some key advantages of role-play as a learning method are :

1. It is a simple and low-cost method, and does not require materials or time in preparation.

2. It focuses right on the problem and helps learners deal with it.

3. It throws considerable light on crucial issues within a short period of time.

4. It provides low risk opportunities to individuals to experiment with new behaviours and open oneself up with support and understanding in the group.

5. It exposes an individual to various points of view as well as diverse reactions to a particular situation, which may not be possible in reality.

DISADVANTAGES

The key limitations of this method are :

1. If the learners are not involved fully, learning can be hampered and the session serves as entertainment.

2. Participants can get too intensely involved in their roles and may not be able to look at themselves and the dynamics from a distance.

3. Role-playing can become an end in itself - roles can be exaggerated, distorted or underplayed. The tends to reduce its potential for learning.

4. During the reflection after role-play, much attention needs to be paid to highlight dynamics and issues on which it was based. If enough care is not exercised, reflection can be curtailed or distor   thereby undermining learning.

ROLE OF FACILITATOR

The facilitator has to set the stage for the role-play activity. As a director of the play, clear and precise instructions need to be given to both observers and actors. The facilitator acts as a clarifier, interpreter, summariser and supporter.

She/he has to be alert to the emotional problems that could develop in the process, and affect both the observers and the actors. The facilitator also needs to monitor and observe the process during the play.

In the group discussion and analysis following the role-play, care must be exercised not to run down any particular individual. The focus of analysis should be kept at the level of the issues and dynamics, not the individuals and their ability to role-play.

Source

'TRAINING OF TRAINERS : *A Manual for Participatory Training Methodology in Development* Society for Participatory Research in Asia. 1987.